REGISTER PAJARONIAN

~~Saturday 22 October 1977~~ Friday 21 October 1977

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Mural artists work with ex-addicts

A grant from the California Arts Council has been awarded to Carmen Leon and Vicki Petrovich to work with residents of Freedom House, a live-in center for rehabilitation drug addicts on San Andreas Road.

The two artists, who have done murals in Watsonville and Santa Cruz, are in the planning stages of an "art as therapy" project at Freedom House. The result will be a mural, conceived of and made by the ex-drug addicts to depict their past experiences and their hopes for the future.

With the grant, the two women will be paid $800 a month for five months out of a six-month program, and the Drug Abuse Council is giving them "in kind" pay, that is, meals and facilities.

But they have virtually no money for supplies, and have been asking for donations from the community. So far, they have been given drafting supplies from Leggett's and they need brushes and donations for special paints that they can purchase at a 50 per cent discount.

The mural will be done on portable panels and will be exhibited throughout the county.

Examples of the women's mural work are the Front Street side of the Mona Lisa cafe, courtyard walls at Radcliff bi-lingual, bi-cultural school, a wall at Las Palmas on Front Street, and the mural behind the food counter at The Catalyst in Santa Cruz.

They spend all day each Sunday working at Freedom House.

Another activity for the two artists has been painting props and skeleton masks for the Day of the Dead parade and a production by Teatro Campesino which will be held Oct. 30 in San Juan Bautista.

R-P 10/22/77

family